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Message Text

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PM-03 H-02 INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01

SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06 OMB-01 /075 W
---------- 019087
R 311311Z JUL 75
FM AMEMBASSY BONN
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 1831
INFO AMEMBASSY BERLIN
USMISSION USBERLIN
AMEMBASSY LONDON
AMEMBASSY PARIS
AMEMBASSY MOSCOW
USMISSION NATO BRUSSELS

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 03 BONN 12371

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PFOR, GW, UR, GE, WB
SUBJECT: BRANDT'S VISIT TO THE USSR

REF: A. BONN 11886 B. MOSCOW 9758

BEGIN SUMMARY: DESPITE GENERALLY UPBEAT TREATMENT OF BRANDT'S SOVIET VISIT IN THE WEST GERMAN PRESS, SOME OFFICIALS IN THE SPD AND IN THE FRG FONOFF SEEM MUCH LESS IMPRESSED WITH THE RESULTS OF THE TRIP. SPECULATION AS TO THE MEANING OF BREZHNEV'S SOMEWHAT AMBIGUOUS REMARKS ABOUT BERLIN CONTINUES. WHILE A PERSONAL ASSISTANT WHO WAS ALONG ON THE TRIP THINKS BRANDT AND BREZHNEV AGREED ON THE DESIRABILITY OF ELIMINATING SOME OF THE HAGGLING OVER BERLIN ISSUES, FONOFF BERLIN EXPERTS POINT TO AN IMPLICATION THAT BREZHNEV'S IDEA FOR DOING SO IS TO SUBORDINATE THE CONCEPT OF "STRICT OBSERVANCE AND FULL IMPLEMENTATION" OF THE QUADRIPARTITE AGREEMENT TO GREATER ATTENTION TO THE "GENERAL SPIRIT" OF THE QA--MEANING, FOR MOSCOW, THAT BERLIN IS
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NOT A PART OF THE FRG. OUR SOURCES ALSO NOTE THAT THE

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SOVIETS DID NOT PERSUADE BRANDT OF THE DESIRABILITY OF INSTITUTIONALIZED PARTY-TO-PARTY CONTACTS. THEY DENY THAT ANY "DEAL" WAS MADE CONCERNING AN EVENTUAL EXCHANGE OF EAST GERMAN SPY GUENTHER GUILLAUME. END SUMMARY.

1. WHAT WE HAVE LEARNED SO FAR ABOUT THE JULY 2-10 VISIT BY SPD CHAIRMAN WILLY BRANDT SUPPLEMENTS EMBASSY MOSCOW'S REPORTING (REF B) MORE IN THE AREA OF ATMOSPHERICS AND SPECULATION THAN HARD FACT. INDEED, ACCORDING TO ONE SOURCE, NO NEW IDEAS OR POSITIONS EMERGED ON THE VARIOUS TOPICS DISCUSSED, WITH THE POSSIBLE EXCEPTION OF BERLIN. EMBOFFS HAVE RECEIVED BRIEFINGS FROM BRANDT'S PERSONAL ASSISTANT (DR. WILKE), WHO ACCOMPANIED BRANDT TO THE USSR, AND ALSO FROM FONOFF OFFICIAL ON FONMIN GENSCHER'S STAFF (BAZING) WHOSE RESPONSIBILITIES INCLUDE LIAISON WITH DOMESTIC POLITICAL LEADERS. IN ADDITION, THE FRG REP HAS CIRCULATED IN THE BONN GROUP A MEMO GIVING INITIAL FONOFF ANALYSIS OF BREZHNEV'S WIDELY-PUBLICIZED AFTER-DINNER REMARKS ON BERLIN.

2. MANY ASPECTS OF THE VISIT ARE THE SUBJECT OF SPECULATION, INCLUDING THE QUESTION OF WHY THE SOVIETS RENEWED THEIR INVITATION TO BRANDT AFTER HE HAD RESIGNED AS CHANCELLOR IN THE WAKE OF THE GUILLAUME AFFAIR. ACCORDING TO BAZING, SOVIET EXPERTS IN THE FONOFF AND IN THE FRG EMBASSY IN MOSCOW ADVANCE A VARIETY OF POSSIBLE REASONS: A VISIT BY BRANDT, WHO IS VERY POPULAR IN THE SOVIET UNION. ("THE HERO OF DETENTE"), WOULD BOOST BREZHNEV'S PRESTIGE; IT MIGHT BE AN EFFORT TO MAKE ATONEMENT TO BRANDT FOR THE GUILLAUME AFFAIR; IT COULD SHOW THE GDR THAT IT DID NOT ENJOY HEGEMONY IN SOVIET-GERMAN RELATIONS; OR IT COULD BE USED TO REFUTE CHARGES BY COMMUNIST PARTIES OUTSIDE THE SOVIET UNION, ESPECIALLY THOSE IN ITALY AND YUGOSLAVIA, THAT THE SOVIET COMMUNIST PARTY IS INSULAR AND FEARS CONTACTS WITH THE OUTSIDE WORLD.

3. THERE IS ALSO AN ASSUMPTION THAT THE SOVIETS, WHO CONFIDENTIAL

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INCREASINGLY STRESSED BRANDT'S PARTY ROLE AS THE VISIT PROGRESSED (AND WHO, AS MOSCOW HAS REPORTED, TRIED TO KEEP THE FRG EMBASSY AT ARM'S LENGTH), HOPED TO USE THE VISIT TO INITIATE REGULAR SPD-CPSU CONTACTS. IF SO, THEY MAY HAVE BEEN DISAPPOINTED WHEN BRANDT, ON HIS RETURN, STRONGLY REAFFIRMED HIS OPPOSITION TO INSTITUTIONALIZED CONTACTS BETWEEN THE SPD AND COMMUNIST PARTIES. ACCORDING TO WILKE, SPD-CPSU "COOPERATION" IS

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DEFINITELY NOT WHAT BRANDT AND THE SPD ARE INTERESTED
IN, THOUGH THEY DO FAVOR INFORMAL CONTACTS.

4. WITH REGARD TO THE GUILLAUME AFFAIR, WILKE EMPHAS-
IZED THAT ALLEGATIONS IN "QUICK" (REPORTED REF A) OF A
BRANDT-BREZHNEV AGREEMENT ON AN EXCHANGE OF GUILLAUME
ARE "ABSOLUTELY FALSE." WILKE (WHO WAS NOT PRESENT IN

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PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06 /075 W
---------- 019182
R 311311Z JUL 75
FM AMEMBASSY BONN
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 1832
INFO AMEMBASSY BERLIN
USMISSION USBERLIN
AMEMBASSY LONDON
AMEMBASSY PARIS
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ALL THE CONVERSATIONS) SAID THAT THE GUILLAUME INCIDENT
WAS NOT RAISED EXPLICITLY IN THE BRANDT-BREZHNEV CON-
VERSATION BUT THAT "IT COULD NOT HELP BUT BE ALLUDED TO
IN AN INFERENTIAL FASHION." HE ADDED THAT BRANDT'S
IMPRESSION WAS THAT BREZHNEV HAD NOT KNOWN "DIRECTLY"
ABOUT GUILLAUME.

5. ON THE SUBSTANTIVE ASPECTS OF THE VISIT, BAZING
SAID THE FONOFF IS PARTICULARLY INTERESTED IN BREZHNEV'S

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STATEMENT ON BERLIN, ESPECIALLY THE PASSAGE (IN FBIS TRANSLATION), "WE STAND FOR THE OBSERVANCE AND RESPECT OF EACH LETTER AND THE GENERAL SPIRIT OF THE FOUR-PARTY AGREEMENT BY ALL SIDES AND ARE CONVINCED THAT THIS IS THE ONLY BASIS ON WHICH WEST BERLIN CAN SOLVE ITS PROBLEMS AND BE TRANSFORMED FROM A SOURCE OF ARGUMENT INTO A CONSTRUCTIVE ELEMENT FOR PEACE AND RELAXATION." WILKE TOLD EMBOFF HE COULD NOT CLARIFY WHAT SPECIFIC INTENTIONS MIGHT LIE BEHIND THE BREZHNEV STATEMENT, BUT CONFIDENTIAL

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ADDED THAT "BRANDT AND BREZHNEV BOTH TAKE THE GENERAL ATTITUDE THAT, ALTHOUGH OBVIOUSLY IMPORTANT POWER CONSIDERATIONS ARE INVOLVED, AT LEAST SOME OF THE HAIR-SPLITTING COULD BE DISPENSED WITH IN FAVOR OF THINKING IN TERMS OF THE BROADER PICTURE." PRELIMINARY THINKING AT THE FONOFF, HOWEVER, IS THAT WHAT MOSCOW MEANS BY "THE BROADER PICTURE" MAY NOT BE TOO REASSURING. ACCORDING TO BAZING, SOVIET EXPERTS ARE TRYING TO DECIDE WHETHER BREZHNEV'S REMARKS SIGNAL THE BEGINNING OF A SHIFT IN SOVIET POLICY ON BERLIN AND, IF SO, WHETHER IT IS A "STEP FORWARD OR BACKWARD"; HE THOUGHT THE BONN GROUP SHOULD CONSIDER THE STATEMENT CAREFULLY.

6. ALTHOUGH THE BONN GROUP HAS NOT TAKEN UP THE BREZHNEV STATEMENT AS A SPECIFIC AGENDA ITEM (IT WILL BE CONSIDERED AS A PART OF THE OVER-ALL STUDY OF LIKELY SOVIET ATTITUDES TOWARD BERLIN IN THE POST-CSCE ERA), THE INITIAL FRG ANALYSIS REFERRED TO ABOVE NOTES THE DANGER THAT BREZHNEV MAY HAVE BEEN POINTING TO GREATER EMPHASIS ON THE SEPARATION OF WEST BERLIN FROM THE FRG AS THE ROAD TO SOLUTION OF THE BERLIN PROBLEM. FOLLOWING IS THE TEXT OF THE INFORMAL MEMO CIRCULATED BY THE FRG BONN GROUP REPRESENTATIVE:

BEGIN TEXT. IN HIS TOAST, BREZHNEV DEALS EXTENSIVELY WITH BERLIN...BREZHNEV'S STATEMENTS IN THIS CONTEXT ARE MORE COMPREHENSIVE AND DIFFERENTIATED THAN ON EARLIER OCCASIONS. THE GERMAN-SOVIET RELATIONSHIP CAN BE IMPROVED STILL FURTHER, PROVIDED THAT "NO PASSIONS ARE AROUSED ABOUT BERLIN" (BEHAVIOUR WITH WHICH THE FRG IS APPARENTLY CHARGED). WORTH NOTING IS BREZHNEV'S STATEMENT THAT THE USSR ADVOCATES GOOD BUSINESSLIKE RELATIONS (SACHLICHE VERBINDUNGEN) WITH WEST BERLIN AS WELL AS THE SAFEGUARDING OF THE VIABILITY OF THE CITY AND RESPECT FOR THE LEGITIMATE RIGHTS OF ITS INHABITANTS.

IT IS NOTEWORTHY IN BREZHNEV'S STATEMENTS ON THE QUADRIPARTITE AGREEMENT THAT THE "STRICT OBSERVANCE" FORMULA IS NOT EXPLICITLY USED. INSTEAD, THE SAME IDEA IS NOW

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EXPRESSED IN A NEW VARIANT, THAT THE USSR ADVOCATES THE PRESERVATION OF AND RESPECT FOR EVERY SINGLE LETTER OF
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THE AGREEMENT AS WELL AS ITS GENERAL SPIRIT. THIS DOES NOT, OF COURSE, RULE OUT (THE CONCEPT OF) FULL IMPLEMENTATION, BUT THE LATTER IS SUPPLEMENTED BY THE CRITERION OF THE "GENERAL SPIRIT" OF THE AGREEMENT WHICH, IN THE SOVIET VIEW, IS FIRST AND FOREMOST THE SPIRIT OF WEST BERLIN'S NOT BELONGING TO THE FEDERAL REPUBLIC.

ALSO DESERVING ATTENTION IS THE VIEW THAT, ON THIS BASIS, BERLIN (WEST) COULD SOLVE ITS PROBLEMS AND CHANGE FROM A SOURCE OF DISPUTES TO A CONSTRUCTIVE ELEMENT OF PEACE AND DETENTE. IN THIS CONTEXT, IT IS NOT THE QUADRIPARTITE AGREEMENT, BUT BERLIN ITSELF WHICH IS FOCUSED ON AS THE SOURCE OF DISPUTES. IN THESE STATEMENTS OF BREZHNEV'S,
BERLIN EMERGES AS A SUBJECT THAT WILL SOLVE ITS PROBLEMS ITSELF AND THAT IS POTENTIALLY SEEN AS A FACTOR OF DETENTE--AN ALLUSION TO LONG-RANGE SOVIET CONCEPT OF BERLIN (WEST) AS A STATE. END TEXT

7. COMMENT. IN THE ABSENCE OF INFORMATION ON WHAT BREZHNEV MAY HAVE TOLD BRANDT IN PRIVATE ABOUT BERLIN, WE ARE DISINCLINED TO READ HIS PUBLIC REMARKS AS INDICATING A POLICY SHIFT IN ONE DIRECTION OR THE OTHER.
ON THE ONE HAND, ANY DISPOSITION TO LESSEN THE

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PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06 /075 W
---------- 019158
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FM AMEMBASSY BONN
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IRRITANT EFFECT OF BERLIN IN FRG-SOVIET RELATIONS WILL SOON BECOME APPARENT IF THE SOVIETS MAKE CONCESSIONS PERMITTING THE CONCLUSION OF THE VARIOUS LONG-PENDING BILATERAL NEGOTIATIONS. ON THE OTHER HAND, THE SOVIETS HAVE FOR SOME TIME INTIMATED THAT THEY LOOK UPON THE REAFFIRMATION THAT THE WESTERN SECTORS OF BERLIN ARE NOT A CONSTITUENT PART OF THE FRG AND ARE NOT TO BE GOVERNED BY IT AS THE CARDINAL PRINCIPLE OF THE QA. IF, AS THE FRG ANALYSIS SUGGESTS, BREZHNEV'S SOMEWHAT CRYPTIC REMARKS WERE AIMED AT REASSERTING THAT POINT, IT WOULD MEAN THAT MOSCOW IS GOING TO CONTINUE ITS EFFORTS TO WEAKEN THE TIES BETWEEN BERLIN AND THE FRG--A DISCONCERTING BUT NOT PARTICULARLY NOVEL PROSPECT. END COMMENT.

8. IN HIS CONVERSATION WITH EMBOFF, BAZING VOLUNTEERED A REFERENCE TO A SUGGESTION IN "SPIEGEL" THAT BRANDT IS UPSTAGING GENSCHER WITH HIS TRAVELS AND FLATLY DENIED
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ALLEGATIONS OF TENSIONS WITH EITHER GENSCHER OR SCHMIDT ON THAT ACCOUNT. BAZING SAID THAT BRANDT COORDINATED HIS DIPLOMATIC TRAVELS CLOSELY WITH THE CHANCELLOR AND THE FOREIGN MINISTER.

9. ON DOMESTIC SOVIET ASPECTS, WILKE REMARKED THAT BREZHNEV SEEMED TO HAVE SOME PHYSICAL DIFFICULTY IN SPEAKING IN THE FIRST MINUTE OF HIS DINNER SPEECH, BUT HAD NO TROUBLE DURING THE REMAINDER OF THE SPEECH AND GENERALLY SEEMED IN GOOD SHAPE AND RELAXED. BAZING, WHOSE COMMENTS WERE PRESUMABLY BASED ON BRANDT'S DEBRIEFING TO GENSCHER, SAID BRANDT HAD LEFT THE USSR WITH THE IMPRESSION THAT BREZHNEV WAS FIRMLY IN CONTROL AND WOULD REMAIN SO FOR THE FORESEEABLE FUTURE.

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10. WILKE'S OVER-ALL EVALUATION WAS THAT THE TRIP COULD BE TERMED "A SUCCESS," BUT THAT "OF COURSE, BRANDT HAS NO ILLUSION ABOUT THE USSR" AND HIS EXPECTATIONS ABOUT THE SPEED AND NATURE OF PROGRESS IN EAST-WEST RELATIONS ARE MODEST.
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